



## THE BLUE FAMILY TREE

Newsletter article July, 2021

I try not to get political in my monthly article. After all, it is designed to save police lives and improve police-community relations. What would politics possibly have to do with that!?

The truth is that even though we have not asked to be a part of the national political stage, here we are. We don't ask for anything that happens to us. The name "first responder" came from somewhere. We respond to what our government, our citizenry, and our regular clients provide us with. Having responded for more than two decades now, I feel I can say with a great level of certainty that no one responds to the changes in their environment better than America's police. We have spent years talking about the pendulum and we understand the masses are supportive of our mission, but at times the loudest voices may not be. We know eventually the pendulum swings back again. We haven't seen a pendulum swing in our favor in quite some time. Many of us, myself included, are beginning to wonder if the pendulum has become a one way rocket with booster packs. As things have continued to decline for police, we have had to abandon thoughts of pendulums and look further into our past and seek solace in knowing that times have been bad before and over decades, they got better. But when we critically look at where times have been and where they are now, well we may still be swinging that pendulum and its just picking up steam. It seems this is as bad as it's ever been for American police. As attitudes towards law enforcement change and opinions become stronger under the power of emotion and ignorance, we lose things like qualified immunity, and if someday the pendulum in fact swings back, law has already been made. If history tells us anything it's this: The pendulum represents the attitude toward police, but the wake of bad law it leaves behind never goes away.

Before I continue I want to add this small disclaimer: I am a conservative who follows the constitution. I believe our founders were brilliant and ahead of their time, and even ours, but they could not possibly predict things like cars, and phones, and television media, and this list never ends. You don't know what you don't know and without that, they could not adequately protect the constitution from things of the future. They tried to build in protections for all three branches so no one could rule the land alone. They came from tyrants, and the constitution was written solely to keep tyranny away from the American people. They would sooner lay down their lives at Plymouth Rock than bow to tyranny again. Now you know where I stand, and I know there are police out there who are more liberal leaning than I, although I venture not too many. My goal is not to divide police. We all know there are issues we lean left or right on and that's what makes America amazing. We can have different views. But we all need to agree that the constitution is the rule of the land or we have no common ground, particularly as police who have vowed to defend the constitution first.

Since when did the constitution become a left and right issue? I always thought both sides loved that founding document and had sworn to protect it. I remember when I was a boy watching the first gulf war. The entire country came together and patriotism was at an all-time high. After the 48 hour war subsided, some time passed and we began to polarize once again but we were all still proud to be Americans. Then we woke up one Tuesday morning in 2001 and our fire for our love of this country was re-ignited with jet fuel that was spilled by those who hate us for no other reason than being American. It was a magnificent fire of love and rage and brotherhood, and commitment to each other and our flag and our nation. But again, as time passed we fell asleep. And then we drifted further and further apart. Today you can pick the event from Edward Snowden to the Covid response and we are entirely split on whether it was something we should rally behind for love of the country or something this country deserved for its atrocities. With division at this core belief, we

will struggle to stay together, and if we do not stay together we will all fall.

This month we celebrate the birth of the greatest nation ever to be established by mankind in the history of this amazing planet. At least some of us do, and I believe that there are one million Americans who don a badge who have sworn to protect and serve their communities that will celebrate exactly that.

This July fourth, as a police officer, forget your political affiliation and recognize that anyone on either side of the isle who attacks the foundation of this country is against you because you swore first to uphold the constitution of the united states. I'm not calling for mutiny. I don't even begin to suggest something so absurd. I am asking you to stay the course for what you swore to do even when the political climate and influential forces above you make it increasingly difficult to do so. We interpret law everyday and make millisecond decisions based on that interpretation. We are better versed in the constitution than stadiums full lawyers who have to debate the facts we faced for years before concluding on our decision and our fate. There are several things that make us constitutional experts; We have studied the constitution and we practice it based on past case law and our own policies, procedures, and even experiences as we grow as officers. But the most important ingredient in our expertise is something that makes us unique. While lawyers look at the black and white print and debate interpretations, we read the words and understand the reasons, and we respond from our hearts which were designed by God to be the protectors of his children. We base our decisions in love of all people and love of this great nation, just like the founders did, and therefore we will never be led astray.